

TASMANIAN FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB INC.

established 1904

BULLETIN

<http://www.tasfieldnats.org.au>

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Bulletin No. 321 (quarterly)

January 2006

The Tasmanian Field Naturalists Club encourages the study of natural history and supports conservation. We issue our journal *The Tasmanian Naturalist* annually in October. People of any age and background are welcome as members.

Phone Janet Fenton (03 6239 6443) for further information, or write to GPO Box 68, Hobart, 7001.

Programme

General Meetings start at 7.45 pm on the first Thursday of the month. in the Life Science Building at the University of Tasmania. Outings are usually held the following weekend, meeting outside the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery entrance in Macquarie Street. Bring lunch and all-weather outdoor gear.

If you are planning to attend an outing but have not been to the prior meeting, please check details. Phone Janet Fenton 03 6239 6443 or email Don Hird. Unforeseen changes sometimes occur.

Thurs 2 Feb. Meeting	<u>7.45pm</u> : Arthur Clark will speak to the Club primarily about caving, and has offered to show us around his interesting property at Francistown near Dover on Saturday.
Sat 4 Feb (+ optional Sun 5) Excursion	<u>9.00am</u> Depart from the Museum to look around Arthur's Francistown property near Dover. Bring a sleeping bag, thermia-rest, torch, food etc if staying over for caving (to see glow-worms, cave spiders, cave formations etc.) on the Sunday. Arthur has some floor space, but you may like to bring a tent if you plan to stay overnight. For caving please bring gumboots or sturdy walking boots that can cope with getting wet, old clothes (pref overalls), torch, or even better, a helmet with mounted light. Arthur may be able to hire a few helmets from the Caving Club. More details at the February meeting.
Sat 18 Feb Skemps Day	The Launceston Field Naturalists Club has invited us to join them for Land for Wildlife day at their field station "Skemps" at Myrtlebank. For details on how to get there etc, phone Al Pegler 6344 1076, or Genevieve Gates 6227 8638. For a small fee you can stay overnight in the field station.
Thurs 2 Mar Meeting	<u>7.45pm</u> : AGM. Committee positions will be open for election and reports on the Club's activities in the last year will be presented. Janet Fenton will present the Presidential Address, "A digital ramble around Port Davey".

Sun 5 Mar Excursion	Stinking Bay, Tasman Peninsula
Thurs 6 April Meeting	<u>7.45pm</u> : Mike Dreissen from DPWI will be our guest speaker on: "Things that hop and sing: Grasshoppers and Crickets of Tasmania".
Sat8 or Sun9 Apr	Excursion, TBA.

From the Treasurer

Please be kind to your treasurer and send your 2006 Subs. in *NOW* !

Family Membership \$35; Single Membership \$30; Concessional Membership \$25

Any queries please phone Anna on 6239 6 326 or email on Anna.McEldowney@utas.edu.au

The Tasmanian Naturalist

Please start thinking about articles for this now. Our journal appears annually in October and includes a range of articles around the theme of natural history. Editor: Simon Grove Simon.Grove@forestrytas.com.au

Articles can range from short reports to extended scientific articles accessible to interested members of the general public. Refer to previous issues of the *Naturalist* for examples of style and suitable content.

Excursion Report: Snug Falls and BBQ at Dru Point - Janet Fenton

Twelve naturalists set out for Snug Falls in misty drizzle on Saturday 3rd December, all clad in parkas with hoods up, with the exception of Don, who turned up in shorts, sunglasses and hat, unafraid of a little dampness.

Good weather for frogs! *Crinia signifera* (common froglet) was heard calling loudly from a dam near the car-park. At the top of the track *Philotheca virgata* was in full bloom and as we headed downhill we admired the larger eucalypts, looking magnificent in silhouette against a backdrop of mist in the gully. Several large eucalypts had recently fallen. The bush beside the path was star-studded with flowers of *Nematolepis squamea*. This used to be called *Phebaleum squameum*, alias satinwood, lance-wood, tallow-wood, dog-wood etc. etc.

Plants: Seung-Ah compiled a plant list (below) for the day. A fern list was written up on a past TFNC trip to Snug Falls in June 2000 with Michael Garrett

PLANT LIST Snug Falls, 3 December 2005 (* TAS endemic)					
No	Botanical Name		No	Botanical Name	
1	Asteraceae	<i>Cassinia aculeata</i>	21	Mimosaceae	<i>Acacia riceana</i> *
2	Asteraceae	<i>Olearia argophylla</i>	22	Mimosaceae	<i>Acacia terminalis</i>

3	Asteraceae	<i>Olearia phlogopappa</i>	23	Mimosaceae	<i>Acacia verniciflua</i>
4	Blechnaceae	<i>Blechnum nudum</i>	24	Myrtaceae	<i>Eucalyptus obliqua</i>
5	Cunoniaceae	<i>Bauera rubioides</i>	25	Myrtaceae	<i>Eucalyptus temiramis</i> *
6	Cyperaceae	<i>Gahnia grandis</i>	26	Myrtaceae	<i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i>
7	Dicksoniaceae	<i>Dicksonia antarctica</i>	27	Myrtaceae	<i>Leptospermum scoparium</i> .
8	Dennstaedtiaceae	<i>Pteridium esculentum</i>	28	Myrtaceae	<i>Melaleuca squarrosa</i>
9	Elaeocarpaceae	<i>Aristotelia peduncularis</i> *	29	Orchidaceae	<i>Calochilus robertsonii</i>
10	Epacridaceae	<i>Epacris impressa</i>	30	Orchidaceae	<i>Chiloglottis cornuta</i>
11	Epacridaceae	<i>Epacris lanuginosa</i>	31	Pittosporaceae	<i>Billardiera longiflora</i>
12	Euphorbiaceae	<i>Amperea xiphioclada</i>	32	Proteaceae	<i>Banksia marginata</i>
13	Fabaceae	<i>Gompholobium hmegeii</i>	33	Ranunculaceae	<i>Clematis</i> sp.
14	Fabaceae	<i>Oxylobium ellipticum</i>	34	Rhamnaceae	<i>Pomaderris apetala</i>
15	Fabaceae	<i>Pultenaea daphnoides</i>	35	Rubiaceae	<i>Coprosma nitida</i>
16	Fabaceae	<i>Pultenaea juniperina</i>	36	Rutaceae	<i>Philotheca virgata</i>
17	Goodeniaceae	<i>Goodenia ovata</i>	37	Rutaceae	<i>Nematolepis squamea</i>
18	Lamiaceae	<i>Prostanthera lasianthos</i>	38	Santalaceae	<i>Exocarpos cupressiformis</i>
19	Liliaceae	<i>Dianella</i> sp.	39	Thymelaeaceae	<i>Pimelea</i> sp.
20	Liliaceae	<i>Drymophila cyanocarpa</i>	40	Violaceae	<i>Viola hederacea</i>

In the pool at the foot of Snug Falls we found mayfly and stonefly nymphs and a Trichopteran (Caddisfly) larva, Helicopsychidae, the snail-shelled caddis. Small and very active bugs (possibly small water striders, see p. 159 of *The Waterbug Book*) were found near some vegetation overhanging a quiet pool. There were several larger individuals outnumbered by many smaller in size, running over the surface of the water.

Birds: Two little Tasmanian Scrub-wrens hopped about close to our feet as we watched them on the path. Conditions were less than ideal for bird ID but many were recognized from their calls. Green Rosellas, Grey Currawong, Tasmanian Scrub-wrens and what was probably a gang of Silver-eyes were seen. Recognised from calls only were Olive Whistler, Grey Thrush, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Thornbill, Spotted Pardalote and Shining Bronze Cuckoo.

Snails Kevin Bonham reports – "It was very difficult to find snails on this outing because the gloomy conditions made small snails hard to see in the wet forests. I only found six specimens, however each was a different species and three of these (marked *) were not seen on my only previous serious search at this site (the club's trip there in 2000). Species found: *Tasmaphena sinclairi**, *Prolesophanta nelsonensis*, *Elsothera ricei*, *Allocharopa* sp. "Wellington", *Allocharopa legrandi**, *Helicarion cuvieri**."

Fungi: The quote of the day came from Genevieve, who exclaimed, "That's the biggest *Postia pelliculosa* I've ever seen!". A full fungi list will appear in the next Bulletin.

Rain pelted down in earnest just as we set up our BBQ at Dru Point, Margate, making us most appreciative of the roof over our heads, hot food and mugs of billy tea. Warwick enlivened the usual BBQ menu of *Bos taurus* and *Ovis aries* with some colourful and flavoursome contributions of *Pleurotus ostreatus*, *P. citrinopileatus*, *P. flabellatus*, *Lentimula edodes* and *Agrocybe aegerita*. Adult and immature Silver Gulls looked on from a safe distance. We watched a Magpie on the fence, Masked Lapwing feeding on the grass and a Pied Oyster-catcher also feeding on the lawn. A Tern circled past and flock of twenty-six Black Swan floated about on the bay.

Shells from South Arm excursion

In September 2005 the TFNC visited South Arm. Shells were collected from Hope Beach, exposed to the south, and from the sheltered northern beach in Ralphs Bay. Simon Grove subsequently identified the shells. The table below lists the specimens collected from the two sites.

Shells collected from South Arm isthmus 3 September 2005

[N: North (Ralphs Bay), S: South (Hope Beach), 0 = absence, 1 = presence]

Class	Family	Species binomial with subgenus and author	N	S
Bivalvia	Cardiidae	<i>Fulvia tenuicostata</i> (Lamarck, 1819)	0	1
Bivalvia	Glycymeridae	<i>Glycymeris (Glycymeris) striatularis</i> (Lamarck, 1819)	0	1
Bivalvia	Hiattellidae	<i>Panopea australis</i> Sowerby, 1833	0	1
Bivalvia	Lucinidae	<i>Wallucina assimilis</i> (Angas, 1868)	1	0
Bivalvia	Mactridae	<i>Mactra (Anstromactra) rufescens</i> Lamarck, 1819	0	1
Bivalvia	Mesodesmatidae	<i>Anapella cycladea</i> (Lamarck, 1818)	1	0
Bivalvia	Mytilidae	<i>Brachidontes (Brachidontes) rostratus</i> (Dunker, 1857)	0	1
Bivalvia	Mytilidae	<i>Modiolus (Modiolus) albicostatus</i> Lamarck, 1819	0	1
Bivalvia	Mytilidae	<i>Mytilus (Mytilus) galloprovincialis</i> Lamarck, 1819	1	1
Bivalvia	Mytilidae	<i>Xenostrobus securis</i> (Lamarck, 1819)	1	0

Bivalvia	Ostreidae	<i>Crassostrea gigas</i> Thunberg, 1793	0	1
Bivalvia	Ostreidae	<i>Ostrea (Eostrea) angasi</i> Sowerby, 1871	0	1
Bivalvia	Pectinidae	<i>Mimachlamys asperrima</i> (Lamarck, 1819)	0	1
Bivalvia	Pectinidae	<i>Pecten fumatus</i> Reeve, 1852	0	1
Bivalvia	Psammobiidae	<i>Gari (Psammobia) livida</i> (Lamarck, 1818)	0	1
Bivalvia	Psammobiidae	<i>Soletellina (Soletellina) hiradiata</i> (Wood, 1815)	1	0
Bivalvia	Veneridae	<i>Placamen placidum</i> (Philippi, 1844)	0	1
Bivalvia	Veneridae	<i>Tawera gallinula</i> (Lamarck, 1818)	0	1
Gastropoda	Amphibolidae	<i>Salinator fragilis</i> (Lamarck, 1822)	1	0
Gastropoda	Batillariidae	<i>Batillariella estuarina</i> (Tate, 1893)	1	0
Gastropoda	Batillariidae	<i>Zeacumantus diemenensis</i> (Quoy & Gaimard, 1834)	1	0
Gastropoda	Buccinidae	<i>Cominella (Cominella) lineolata</i> (Lamarck, 1809)	1	0
Gastropoda	Cassidae	<i>Semicassis (Semicassis) thomsoni</i> (Brazier, 1875)	1	0
Gastropoda	Fascioliariidae	<i>Fusinus (Fusinus) novaezelandicae</i> (Reeve, 1847)	1	0
Gastropoda	Haliotidae	<i>Haliotis (Notohaliotis) ruber</i> Leech, 1814	1	1
Gastropoda	Littorinidae	<i>Bembicium melanostomum</i> (Gmelin, 1791)	1	0
Gastropoda	Muricidae	<i>Bedeleva paivae</i> (Crosse, 1864)	1	0
Gastropoda	Nacellidae	<i>Cellana solida</i> (Blainville, 1825)	0	1
Gastropoda	Nassariidae	<i>Nassarius (Niotha) pauperatus</i> (Lamarck, 1822)	1	0
Gastropoda	Trochidae	<i>Austrocochlea brevis</i> Parsons & Ward, 1994	1	0
Gastropoda	Turbinidae	<i>Astrarium aureum</i> (Jonas, 1844)	0	1
Gastropoda	Turbinidae	<i>Phasianella australis</i> (Gmelin, 1791)	1	0
Gastropoda	Turritellidae	<i>Maoricolpus roseus</i> (Quoy & Gaimard, 1834)	0	1

From a cursory glance at the above table, it can be noted that there is a preponderance of bivalves on the southern Hopc Beach (1 in column 4), and a preponderance of gastropods on the northern side. This is borne out by a statistical analysis of the 2x2 contingency table formed from the raw data ($P < 0.01$).

Simon Grove offers the following explanation; "Most bivalves are 'infaunal' i.e. they burrow or dwell in their chosen substrate (usually soft sediment). Mussels and oysters are exceptions. Some gastropods are also infaunal but many more are 'epifaunal' - i.e. they dwell on their chosen substrate. Only the odd large epifaunal species would survive the pounding of the waves on the S side, whereas the sheltered N side is

equally suitable for epifauna as for infauna. Actually, if the mud is anaerobic, then it would be more suitable for epifauna than for infauna."

Pygmy Possums: reports wanted

At the December 2005 Members' Night **Don Hird** gave a short presentation on the use of Nest Boxes designed and used interstate specifically for surveying and studying Pygmy Possums:

"I intend to commence such a study in collaboration with a NSW doctoral student and UTAS zoologists. Some Nest Boxes have already been deployed and will be inspected every month or so for the telltale signs of green leaves taken into the boxes as nesting material.

We hope to deploy as many as 100 boxes which should enable useful results for the study of the habitat preferences and distribution of the two species found in Tasmania. Reports are required of sites where Pygmy Possums have reliably been observed. Preferably these should be secluded enough to not attract too much unwanted attention, but be reasonably accessible. Any recent and reliable reports are sought. A range of habitat types and altitudes is desirable.

Interstate, Pygmy Possums have been most reliably recorded from areas with a diversity of flowering shrubs (especially nectar producers like Banksias) at heath and low-shrub to small-tree heights. They reach sub-alpine woodlands."

Federation Meeting

Hosted by the North East Field Nats, accommodation will be at the Scottsdale High School Field Study Centre at Mount Cameron, near Gladstone, on the **24th, 25th, 26th March**.

The centre is set in the Mt. Cameron Range which contains seven small granite peaks and is the dominant landmark of the north east. Coastal features such as dunes, estuaries and lagoons are a short distance from the centre.

The centre has bunk rooms accommodating sixteen and fourteen with male and female bathrooms, and a kitchen. The cost for the centre is \$10p/p/p/night. There will be the small cost of an evening meal on top of that.

The (short) meeting only involves the Club delegate – for the rest of us it is a chance to meet other Field Nats and see a different part of Tasmania with some of the people who know it best!

Enquiries: Genevieve Gates 6227 8638